

From: Hagy-Weatherbee
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 11:02am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hallo,

Paragraphs 1 - 3: Former Consumer of Microsoft's public operating system
(read - non business) software rant

Paragraph 4 - 7: Re-defining a Monopoly while keeping within the standard
definition (i hope)

Final Questions and Statements

Any company that would put out products such as Windows 95, 98, Millennium and XP (the last two are based on my father and brother's experiences) should be put in a deep, dark, hole.

They are bug ridden operating systems internally incompatible (Win 95 and 98 both require DOS which is a 16 bit platform. They hid this in the 32 bit platform of an upgraded Windows 3.1 which they called Win 95 History lesson done).

Put upon a public with no other true OS options but to purchase Unix or Linux (both server software really) or Microsoft's business operating systems which seem to work within normal glitch parameters. The public could do as I did and by Apple software... but that means total abandonment of nearly all previous software and the purchase of all new hardware.

If the above is not enough to burn them how about this:

A Monopoly. I see Microsoft (and others to be fair) as attempting not to monopolize the computer Operating System and related software realm, but, trying to monopolize how we Communicate. Microsoft bundles it's browser which is made to work perfectly with their os. Competitors do not get full os specs so their browsers do not function properly. Microsoft then starts MSN, their own video console game platform - the Xbox.

The last really caught my attention. Console platforms will soon be internet capable... what better way to extend MSN's influence. As I noted briefly above Microsoft is not the only one I see trying to limit my tele-communication choices: AOL-Time Warner, Disney-ABC and AT&T just merged with someone (damn sloppy of me not to have the facts... sorry) and a few others I can not recall, again, sorry.

All of them working on internet-cable/television-telephone operations, or some combination thereof. If we stick with the top three only is that competition? Are we really getting the best price for our choices? No. Yet, I was speaking of Microsoft. With the melding of communications over the last few years the merging of companies the idea of a monopoly must move beyond the oil and railroad standards set a hundred years ago. A broader view must be taken. It can be taken while still using present law (mostly). Especially for the Communications arena.

Microsoft is in a position to be the software company for anything computer/internet/video gaming, whatever allows one to communicate... they have the position and the potential to corner the market.

Does the law require that a monopoly be present in order to bring the punishment to bear? Or is the potential enough?

If it is an Anti-trust suit brought by business, does that not also mean the anti-trust is affecting my family and those around me? Are you thinking of the public's future stake in the above? Or only the businesses involved?

Microsoft is a menace. I have software which I shall never be able to use because the new software sucks and old hardware and software is very difficult to come by (and usually much too degraded to be very useful). New hardware is too fast for my old software and Windows software does not work on Apple products without bridging software... like I need to learn a third computer language.

Mostly it is the company's potential to take over various portions of the communications arena. It is a subtle and very slow process. Like a company with many like subsidiaries (Time Warner owns DC comics and many other book houses), Microsoft links up with various computer and communication areas. Nothing to arouse overt suspicion... Oh, they have an internet browser bundled for free! Wow! They even have their own internet service!

How long before the Windows OS allows 'special' features for their other software (Word, Office, Internet Explorer) that say Apple's OS cannot give (Apple has versions of Word, Office and IE)?

How long before that free browser allows 'special' features for MSN?

How long before Microsoft's in-house games for the Xbox are available only through MSN and over the internet for half or a third the total price as a game created by an outside company?

How long before the Xbox becomes more popular for tele-communications than even a personal computer and Microsoft starts demanding payment from Dell and Gateway for all those things which were once free?

Frightening in a paranoid sort of way... is it not?

(OK... this went on waaaaay too long...)

Look at all the areas which Microsoft could walk into. See the potential gains they could make at the expense of the consumer's choice.

Thankee,

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